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ABSTRACT

Through interviews with 145 children enrolled in two public schools, this study sought to answer five questions: (1) Do children consider page size, type, and illustration position important in their selection of tradebooks? (2) Are there differences between grades, sexes, and among reading ability groups in their consideration of the importance of these format factors in book selection? (3) As a group, do children exhibit preferences within each format factor: page size, type size, type style, and illustration position? (4) Are there differences between grades, sexes, and among reading ability groups for the format factors under investigation? and (5) What do children give as reasons for preferring the format variation selected? From the findings, the following guidelines for the selection of tradebooks were developed: while books having a variety of page sizes should be available to late primary grade children, the majority of books for late intermediate grade children should contain pages of approximately 5 1/2 inches by 8 1/4 inches; type in books for late primary grade children should be at least 12 point, but preferably larger; the type style should be a simple, clear type style, regardless of serifs or their absence; and illustrations in the middle of the page make undesirable choices. (HOD)

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Children's Preferences in Tradebook Format Factors

Maria J. Weiss

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Many factors influence the process of selecting books, particularly tradebooks, by both children and adults. Format, the physical make-up of a book, has long been stressed by authorities in the fields of reading (Chall, 1953), children's literature (Huck, 1976), library science (Bates, 1977) and publishing (Dessauer, 1974) as an important consideration in the selection of tradebooks. The research of Gray and Leary (1935) supports this contention; however, other studies have not addressed the question of the importance of format in any detail.

The physical make-up of a book involves multiple aspects of book design which include book size; number, size, and location of illustrations; color of the book cover; and various typographic factors. Each of these format factors, independently or in conjunction with each other, may influence a child's selection of a tradebook. Previous research has attempted to determine how these format factors affect the book selection process by investigating the reader's preference among several alternatives of a factor. Most of these studies have used adult subjects, and few such studies have been done in recent years. The evidence available regarding children's preferences is even less, and some aspects of format preference have received no research attention.

From those studies which have investigated children's preferences for format factor variations, the following

generalizations are suggested:

1. Primary grade children tend to prefer books with relatively large number of illustrations. (Bamberger, 1922; Grover, 1976)
2. Elementary grade children tend to prefer larger illustrations more often than smaller illustrations. (Bamberger, 1922; Whipple, 1953)
3. Elementary grade children tend to prefer illustrations which are isolated on a page. (Bamberger, 1922; Bou and Lopez, 1953) Primary grade children tend to prefer those illustrations which are not inserted in the printed page. (Bamberger, 1922)
4. There is a controversy as to which size book preschool children prefer. Freeman and Freeman (1933) found that these children tend to prefer small and medium size books while McClenathan (1976) found that preschoolers prefer larger books. In a study by Bamberger (1922) primary grade children tended to prefer larger tradebooks.
5. There are sex differences as to book size preferences among both primary grade children and preschoolers. Males tend to prefer larger books; females tend to prefer smaller books. (Bamberger, 1922; McClenathan, 1976)
6. First graders tend to prefer large size type, whereas fourth graders tend to prefer medium size type. (Zachrisson, 1965)
7. Elementary grade children tend to show no preference for type style. (Zachrisson, 1965)

Purpose of the Study

The present study was concerned with children's preferences for three areas of format related to the printed page: page size, type, and illustration position. Specifically the study sought to answer (1) Do children consider page size, type, and illustration position important in their selection of tradebooks? (2) Are there differences between grades, sexes and among reading ability groups in their consideration of the importance of these format factors in book selection? (3) As a group, do children exhibit preferences within each format fator: page size, type size, type style, and illustration position? (4) Are there differences between grades, sexes, and among reading ability groups for the format factors under investigation? and (5) What do children give as reasons for preferring the format variation selected?

Hypotheses Tested

Based on the above questions, the following research hypotheses were formulated:

1. Third and sixth graders differ significantly in their consideration of the importance of (a) page size, (b) type, and (c) illustration position in tradebook selection.
2. Male and female students differ significantly in their consideration of the importance of (a) page size, (b) type, and (c) illustration position in tradebook selection.
3. Reading ability groups differ significantly in their consideration of the importance of

(a) page size, (b) type, and (c) illustration position in tradebook selection.

4. There is a significant difference between a random selection (expected) and students' expressed preferences (observed) for (a) page size, (b) type size, (c) type style, and (d) illustration position.
5. Third and sixth graders differ significantly in their preferences for (a) page size, (b) type size, (c) type style, and (d) illustration position.
6. Male and female children differ significantly in their preferences for (a) page size, (b) type size, (c) type style, and (d) illustration position.
7. Reading ability groups differ significantly in their preferences for (a) page size, (b) type size, (c) type style, and (d) illustration position.

No hypotheses were formulated regarding the expected outcome of children's reasons for particular format preferences since they were elicited for the purpose of gaining further insight into what influences their preferences and were not amenable to rigorous statistical analysis.

Sample

A total of 145 children enrolled in two public schools in New York participated in the study. The children were divided, for the purpose of the study, into three reading ability groups; a division based on the children's total reading stanines determined by the Metropolitan Achievement Test.

Those children whose stanines were 1, 2, or 3 were considered to be the low ability group. The middle ability group consisted of children with stanines 4, 5, or 6, and the high ability group was comprized of children with stanines 7, 8, and 9. Table 1 shows the distribution of children by grade and reading ability. The distribution of children by sex and reading ability is presented in Table 2.

TABLE 1

DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN BY GRADE AND READING ABILITY

	Low	Middle	High	Total
Grade 3	18	40	17	75
Grade 6	15	40	15	70
Total	33	80	32	145

TABLE 2

DISTRIBUTION OF CHILDREN BY SEX AND READING ABILITY

	Low	Middle	High	Total
Male	19	34	18	71
Female	14	46	14	74
Total	33	80	32	145

Materials

The materials used in this study were designed by the investigator. They were prepared by a professional printer accroding to the specifications required. The specifications for each format factor are described below:

Page size - Colby (1967) states that the standard size of a page of a book for the 9 to 12-year-old age group is 5 1/2 inches x 8 1/4 inches. This standard has a width to length ratio of 1 to 1 1/2. Using this standard as the mid-size variation, the width was increased and decreased by 1 1/2 inches to provide clearly visible but realistic differences in the choices. The width to length ratio was maintained and resulted in the following page size variations:

	Page Size	Double-Spread
Variation 1	4" x 6"	8" x 6"
Variation 2	5½" x 8¼"	11" x 8¼"
Variation 3	7" x 10½"	14" x 10½"

These page size dimensions were used for the printing of each type size and style variation and for the illustration position variations.

Type size - Many recommendations for type size suitable for children can be cited. Kerr (1926) suggests that 24 point be the minimal size for children under seven years of age and 14 point for children over seven years. Burt (1959) recommends 24 point for children under seven years, 18 point for seven to eight, 16 point for eight to nine, 14 point for nine to ten, 12 point for ten to twelve, and 11 point for twelve and older. Tinker (1959) suggests ranges of type size by grade level: 14-18 point for grade one, 12-14 point for grades

two and three, and 10-12 point for grades four through eight. Colby (1967) recommends for ages two through five years, 14, 18, or 24 point; for ages six through nine, 14 to 18 point; for ages nine through twelve, at least 12 point type.

All these authorities have recommended a relatively large type for young children and a gradual decrease in size as the children mature. Adults often read very small type such as 8 point which can be found in newspapers and some paperback books. With these considerations and recommendations in mind, small, medium, and large type size variations were chosen: 8 point, 12 point, and 18 point. Each of these variations was combined with each of the three type style variations discussed below.

Type style - The recommendations for type styles suitable for children involve a controversy over the use of serifs. Serifs are the small finishing strokes at the top and bottom of letters. A type style without these finishing strokes is called san serif. Burt (1959) claims that the use of serifs increases the legibility of print but does not substantiate this claim with research data. Prince (1967) maintains that a san serif type should be used with young readers and the visually handicapped. Orton (1977) argues that "Johnny can't read" as the result of the use of san serif type in books. Summarizing this controversy, Watts and Nisbet (1974) state:

> On the whole, the arguement opposing the use of serifs in books printed for the very young reader, is based on the development of writing skills, rather than any consideration of legibility. Teachers maintain that, to provide for maximum transfer between the two skills of reading and writing, letter

forms should be the same for both. (p.33)

Colby (1967) suggests a "very clear face" for preschool children and shows an example of Baskerville, a serif type, for the 6 to 9-year-old age group. She makes no specific recommendations for older children.

When viewing examples of type style for this study, it became apparent to this investigator that only a book designer or printer could readily tell the difference between some fo the type styles without comparing them for a long period of time. It was apparent, then, that the variations used in this study should be easily discernable to the untrained eye. With both this and the question of serif versus san serif type in mind, the three type style variations chosen were (1) Futura - san serif, (2) Paladium - serif, and (3) Parinesy - serif. The type sizes and type styles were combined to create nine type size/style variation. Samples of these variations appear in Figure 1.

Illustration position - Many variations of illustration position can be found in children's books. Three of these variations were used in this study with each occupying 15 percent of the space of a double-spread. The three variations shown in Figure 2 represent distinct positions on the right-hand side of a double-spread.

Text - The text used in the materials consisted of 350 words selected from the "Dale List of 3000 Familiar Words." These words were arranged so as not to convey any meaningful content. They were, however, arranged on the double-spreads to give the appearance of actual content. The number of words

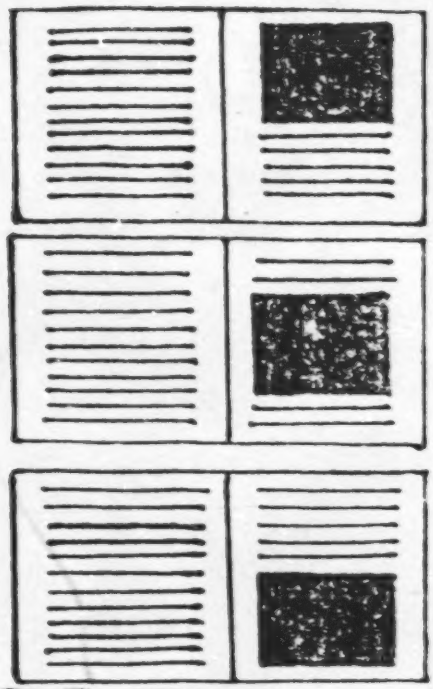
Figure 1

TYPE SIZE/STYLE VARIATIONS

8 point Futura	A admire began to was climb divide cup downstairs. Hidden juicy airfield wrong vote twin is touch school.
12 point Futura	A admire began to was climb divide cup downstairs. Hidden juicy
18 point Futura	A admire began to was climb divide cup
8 point Paladium	A admire began to was climb divide cup downstairs. Hidden juicy airfield wrong vote twin is touch school.
12 point Paladium	A admire began to was climb divide cup downstairs. Hidden juicy airfield
18 point Paladium	A admire began to was climb divide cup down-
8 point Parinesy	
12 point Parinesy	
18 point Parinesy	*A admire began to was climb divide cup downstairs. Hidden*

Figure 2

ILLUSTRATION POSITION VARIATIONS



Illus. at top of right-hand side with print below and on opposite page.

Illus. centered on right-hand side with print above, below and on opposite page.

Illus. at bottom of right-hand side with print above and on opposite page.

printed on each double-spread depended on the size and style of the type used as well as the dimensions of the pages. The text was printed on 80 pound Velum finish paper and occupied approximately 50 percent of the double-spread.

Construction of "dummy books" - The double-spreads, twenty-seven in all, were professionally printed according to the specifications described above for page size, type size, and type style. Three double-spreads were then hand bound into each of nine "dummy books." For example, as shown below for the first book, the three double-spreads printed with 8 point Futura, 8 point Paladium, and 8 point Parinesy were bound into a dummy book with page size dimensions of 4 inches by 6 inches. In order to make the books look complete, blank pages were also bound into the dummy books so that each book consisted of a total of sixty-four pages.

Book	Page Size	Type Variation 1	Type Variation 2	Type Variation 3
1	4" x 6"	8 point Futura	8 point Paladium	8 point Parinesy
2	4" x 6"	12 point Futura	12 point Paladium	12 point Parinesy
3	4" x 6"	18 point Futura	18 point Paladium	18 point Parinesy
4	5½" x 8½"	8 point Futura	8 point Paladium	8 point Parinesy
5	5½" x 8½"	12 point Futura	12 point Paladium	12 point Parinesy
6	5½" x 8½"	18 point Futura	18 point Paladium	18 point Parinesy

Book	Page Size	Variation 1	Variation 2	Variation 3
7	7" x 10"	8 point Futura	8 point Paladium	8 point Parinesy
8	7" x 10"	12 point Futura	12 point Paladium	12 point Parinesy
9	7" x 10"	18 point Futura	18 point Paladium	18 point Parinesy

A blue piece of construction paper, representing the top, middle, and bottom illustration positions, was placed on a second set of the doulbe-spreads. These double-spreads were not bound into the dummy books; rather, during the interview, they were placed over the center double-spread of the corresponding dummy book and shown with the type variation previously selected by each child.

In order to keep each dummy book open and to prevent pages from turning whild the children make their selections, a book stabilizer was used. This consisted of a four foot flat metal stick to which a quarter inch wide piece of white elastic was fastened. The bottom margins of the book were then placed between the metal stick and the elastic band holding them firmly in place.

Data Collection Procedure

All data were collected during the month of January, 1979. Each child was interviewed individually in an empty classroom or bookroom in the school. Each interview lasted approximately 10 minutes.

The interview procedure consisted of three major segments: (1) questions related to page size, (2) questions related to type, and (3) questions related to illustration position. Each segment of the interview was divided into three portions. In the first portion, the child was asked to tell whether the format factor under consideration was important or not important in his selection of tradebooks. In the second portion, the child expressed his preference for the format factor investigated based on the variations presented to him. Finally, the child was asked to supply a reason for each of his format preferences. The response for each portion of all parts of the interview were recorded on a record sheet for each child by the investigator.

Analysis of Data

The evaluation of the responses made by the children interviewed involved two procedures: (1) a statistical analysis of the data related to format importance and format preferences and (2) a descriptive analysis of the data related to children's reasons for format preferences. The chi square test was used for the statistical analysis since variations of this test can be used to (1) compare observed frequency data with theretically expected frequencies and (2) investigate relationships between factors which can be classified into categories. For those hypotheses which involved observed frequency data, it was assumed that the expected values would be evenly distributed, showing no group preferences. The hypotheses were tested with the

appropriate chi square test by means of the subprogram CROSSTABS (Nie, et., al., 1975). All hypothese were tested at the 0.05 level of confidence.

The reasons children gave for their format preferences were evaluated through a descriptive method of analysis utilizing a post hoc categorization of responses.

Limitations of the Study

Conclusions based on the results of this study must take into account cartain limitations. While the design of the materials was to the greatest possible extent in keeping with realistic parameters of actual tradebooks, the use of a nonsense text and black spaces to represent illustrations may have affected the results. These elements of the design were necessary since concern with specific elements of format required their separation from narrative and pictorial content.

A second limitation may be the fact that the children who participated in this investigation live in an urban setting and represent a range of racial and socioeconomic backgrounds. Consequently, the findings of this study may be limited to these racial and socioeconomic parameters.

Third, other interpretations of the reasons children supplied for format preferences may have yielded different conclusions from those of the investigator in this study.

Results and Conclusions

The findings and conclusions of this study are reported in three segments. The first and second segments summarize the statistically significant findings related to format importance and format preferences respectively. The third segment details the categorization of children's reasons for format preferences.

Format Importance (See Table 3) - Format frequently entered into the book selection process of the children interviewed since 70 percent considered at least one of the format areas important when choosing a book. This statement applied to the total sample and is qualified by two additional findings. First, third graders tended to consider factors of format more important to tradebook selection than did sixth graders. Secondly, those children who were classified as high ability readers generally did not consider format factors as important to tradebook selection as did children in the other two reading ability groups.

Of the format areas investigated in this study, type was considered important by the largest percentage of the total group (51%). Page size ranked second (42.8%) while illustration position was least important to the total group (35.9%). These format factors varied in degree of importance to the grade, sex, and reading ability groups investigated. Page size was more important to third graders than to sixth graders. It was also more important to low ability readers than to either middle or high ability readers. Type was

Table 3

SUMMARY OF STATISTICAL FINDINGS RELATED TO FORMAT IMPORTANCE*

		N	PAGE SIZE	TYPE	ILLUSTRATION POSITION
GRADE	3rd	75	52% important	62% important	57.3% not important
	6th	70	67% not important	61% not important	71.4% not important
SEX	M	71	50.7% not important	59.1% important	62% not important
	F	74	63.5% not important	56.8% not important	66.2% not important
READING ABILITY GROUPS	L	33	51.5% important	51.5% not important	72.7% not important
	M	81	54.3% not important	53.1% important	55.6% not important
	H	31	74.2% not important	51.6% not important	77.4% not important

* The percentages reported are the largest for a particular format consideration.

☐ Statistically signifcant difference

considered more important to third graders than to sixth. It is also more important to males than to females and to middle ability readers than to either low or high ability readers. In general, illustration position was not an important consideration in tradebook selection regardless of the children's grade, sex, or reading ability.

Format Preferences (See Table 4) - There were definite preferences exhibited by the total sample regarding page size, type size, type style, and illustration position.

The medium page size ($5\frac{1}{2}$" x $8\frac{1}{4}$") was the preferred page size variation for the total sample. Analysis of grade differences revealed that third graders, as a group, showed little preference for one page size, although they tended to favor either the medium or large size. In contrast, the sixth graders, as a group, tended to be rather consistent in their preference for the medium page size. Male and female subjects, when compared, did not differ significantly in the page size they preferred. Analysis of reading ability group differences revealed that the low and middle groups only slightly preferred one page size, the large, over the other two sizes. In contrast, the high ability group was more homogeneous, showing a strong preference for the medium page size.

The largest type, 18 point, was the preferred type size variation of the total sample. This preference is qualified by an analysis of grade, sex, and reading ability differences. The majority of third graders preferred the 18 point type while the majority of sixth graders preferred the 12 point type.

Table 4

SUMMARY OF STATISTICAL FINDINGS RELATED TO FORMAT PREFERENCES*

		N	PAGE SIZE	TYPE SIZE	TYPE STYLE	ILLUSTRATION POSITION
GRADE	3rd	75	42.7% medium	66.7% 18 point	50.6% Futura	42.7% bottom
	6th	70	58.6% medium	61.4% 12 point	40.0% Futura	47.1% bottom
SEX	M	71	53.6% medium	49.3% 12 point	43.7% Futura	53.5% top
	F	74	47.3% medium	58.1% 18 point	47.3% Futura	53.1% bottom
READING ABILITY GROUPS	L	33	45.5% large	66.7% 18 point	57.6% Futura	54.5% top
	M	81	45.7% large	53.1% 18 point	48.1% Futura	48.1% bottom
	H	31	83.7% medium	61.3% 12 point	58.1% Paladium	45.2% bottom

* The percentages reported are the largest for a particular format preference.

☐ Statistically significant differences

Sex differences were not statistically significant. As for reading ability differences, those children classified as low ability readers as well as those considered middle ability readers, tended to prefer the 18 point type. In contrast, the high ability children strongly favored the 12 point type.

Futura, the san serif type, was the preferred type style of the majority of children interviewed. No significant differences were found bewteen grades or sexes. Reading ability groups did differ significantly, however. Low and middle ability children showed a preference forthe Futura style while children of high reading ability preferred the Paladium serif style.

When both type size and type style were considered, the variations most frequently preferred by the total sample were 18 point Futura (24.14%) and 12 point Paladium (23.45%).

The illustration position preferred by the majority of the total sample was the bottom of the page location. No significant differences were found between grades and among reading ability groups. However, analysis of sex differences revealed that male children preferred illustrations at the top of the page while female children preferred them at the bottom of the page.

It may, therefore, be concluded that differences in children's preferences for page size and typesize were related to the grade and reading ability of the children. Only the variable of reading ability was related to type style and only the variable of sex was related to illustration position.

Reasons for Format Preferences - The third segment of this study investigated children's reasons for particular format preferences. Since the children were allowed to respond in an unstructured manner, their reasons were evaluated utilizing a descriptive method of analysis. The presentation of these findings is discussed in terms of response categories for each format area.

Page Size - The reasons children gave for their particular page size preference clustered into six main response categories:

1. Content Projection - The child's response indicated what he or she thought would appear in the book in terms of story, illustration, or format. Examples of this response included:

> It would be a nice book to read.
> It would have a good story.
>
> If there are big enough picture,
> there won't be much words. The
> big one would have too much words.

2. Functionality - The child's response indicated that the choice of page size was based on how the child could physically finction with the book. Responses of this category included:

> I don't like big books because it
> takes up too much room where you
> are going to put it.
>
> When you carry a big one it would
> fall. This one is easier to carry.
> You can stick it in your bag and
> the bag won't tear.

3. Dimensional Appeal - The child's response indicated a liking for a particular size without any further clarrification of why the size was appealing. Examples of this response category were:

> Because it's not small or not big. It's a good size.
>
> Because it is bigger. I like to read from big books.

4. Previous Experience - The child's response indicated that he or she had read from books of a particular size in the past:

> Because I like reading the Peanuts books and they're this size. Some monster books are this size, too.
>
> All the books I read are this size. The very small one would be for Peter Rabbit.

5. Projected Readability - The child's response indicated the ease or difficulty of reading from a particular page size. This involved any statements which indicated the length of time involved in reading. Responses of this type included:

> Because it wouldn't be that long to read.
>
> It looks like it would be easy to read.

6. Reading Enjoyment - The child's response indicated an enjoyment of or a dislike for reading. Some examples of this response category were:

> Because I like reading.
>
> I don't like to read alot.

Several children gave multiple responses when asked why they selected a particular page size variation. One third grade girl responded with two reasons; the first classified as a "projected readability" response and the second as a "functionality" response:

> I don't like to read big books 'cause they be too hard. I don't like to read the little one 'cause they be too small for my hands.

Table 5 presents the number and percentage of children responding for each of the six categories for page size preferences. The total number of responses (N = 156) is greater then the total number of subjects (N = 145) since several children gave multiple responses.

Table 5

REASONS FOR PAGE SIZE PREFERENCES

Response Category	Number	Percentage
Content Projection	79	50.64
Functionality	12	7.69
Dimensional Appeal	29	18.60
Previous Experience	16	10.26
Projected Readability	12	7.69
Reading Enjoyment	3	1.92
Other	2	1.28
No Response	3	1.92
Total	156	100.00

As the table shows, the largest number of responses was in the content projection category, which accounted for slightly over half of the total number of responses. Only two responses did not fit into any of the other categories and only three children gave no response when asked to provide a reason for their particular page size preference.

Type - Five main categories evolved in the analysis of children's reasons for type preferences. Tinker (1942) suggested that legibility and aesthetics may influence type preference choices. Two of the five response categories which emerged in this study were indeed legibility and aesthetics. These and the other three categories are defined below:

1. Legibility - The child's response indicated that his or her preference was based on the ease of reading or deciphering the print. Examples of this response category were:

> Because the words are just the right size for my eyesight.
>
> If I read the others I would be straining my eyes.

2. Aesthetics - The child's response indicated that the preference was based on the beauty or attractiveness of the print. Responses in this category included:

> I like the way they wrote it.
>
> I like the fancy writing. I like how it is.

3. Quantity of Print - The child's response indicated a preference selection based on the amount of print on the page. Examples of this category of responses were:

> It got lot of words to read.
>
> You have more to read with this printing.

4. Familiarity - The child's response indicated a preference based on previous experience with a particular type variation. Examples of this response category included:

> I'm used to that kind of writing.
>
> I already read a lot of pages like that one.

5. Cursive/Manuscript Reference - The child's response indicated a preference for a particular type variation based on a comparison between that type and cursive or manuscript handwriting. Responses of this kind included:

> It's kind of cursive. I like to write in cursive so that's why I picked this one.
>
> Sometimes I just like to read cursive writing and no other kind of writing.

Several children gave multiple resons for their type preference. A sixth grade girl gave two reasons for her preference; the first reason was classified "aesthetic," the second, "legibility":

> I like the printing, the way it looks and I can read it better.

Table 6 shows the number and percentage of responses children gave for each of the five categories. The total number of different responses was 157.

Table 6

REASONS FOR TYPE PREFERENCES

Response Category	Number	Percentage
Legibility	103	65.60
Aesthetics	27	17.20
Quantity of Print	9	5.70
Familiarity	6	3.80
Cursive/Manuscript Reference	5	3.20
Other	7	4.40
No response	0	0
Total	157	100.00

The largest number of responses fell within the legibility category, which accounted for just over 65 percent of the total number of responses. Seven responses did not fit into any of the categories. These included:

> You might get lost on this other page.
>
> Maybe I would write on a piece of paper like in the book.

All children responded to this portion of the interview.

Illustration Position - The responses children gave as reasons for illustration position preferences tended to cluster into six main categories:

1. Avoidance of Confusion - The child's response indicated a preference for an illustration position variation based on a desire to avoil confusion while reading. Examples of this category included:

> If you were reading this you would have to look here. It is better to have the words at the top. You won't get confused.
>
> It it is in the middle you be messing-up trying to find the next paragraph.

2. Order of Reading - The child's response suggested a preference based on the order in which the child desired to view the illustration and read the words:

> Because first you read and then you could look at the picture.
>
> I like to read from here to the top. Not the other way.

3. Aesthetics - The child's response indicated a preference based on the attractiveness of the double-spread as a result of the location of the illustration. Examples of this category were:

> It looks better there to me.
>
> I just like it in the middle. It looks better there.

4. Visibility - The child's response indicated a preference based on the ease of seeing the words or illustration as a result of the location of the illustraion on the page:

So I can see more words. You can see the picture there better at the bottom.

I can see the picture a lot better. I don't habe to look up or down.

5. Aid to Comprehension - The child's response indicated a preference for an illustration position based on the assumption that the location would aid in comprehending the passage:

You see the picture first, then you find out more about what you're going to read.

After you finish reading the whole paragraph you can get an idea of they're talking about if the picture is at the bottom.

6. Previous Experience - The child's response indicated a preference based on previous experience with that particular illustration position. Examples of this kind of response included:

Because...The picture is supposed to be at the top and they let you read at the bottom. That's where it should be.

When I'm reading... the picture is always supposed to be at the top of the book.

As was noted for page size and type preferences, many children gave multiple reasons for their illustration position preferences. A sixth grade girl gave two reasons for her preference. The first reason was classified "aid to comprehension" and the second, "visibility."

'Cause when you're reading you know what you're reading about. Because you can see the picture in the middle.

The total number of responses was 163. Table 7 presents the number of responses for each category and the corresponding percentages. The "order of reading" category had the largest number of reponses and accounted for slightly over 38 percent of the total number of responses. Only one child gave no response.

Table 7

REASONS FOR ILLUSTRATION POSITION PREFERENCES

Response Category	Number	Percentage
Avoidance of Confusion	28	17.18
Order of Reading	62	38.04
Aesthetics	22	13.50
Visibility	27	16.56
Aid to Comprehension	15	9.21
Previous Experience	7	4.29
Other	1	.61
No response	1	.61
Total	163	100.00

Implications for Teachers, Librarians, and Reviewers

The findings of this study have important implications for teachers and librarians as well as for reviewers of children's books.

It is, of course, essential to make books available to children with content of interest to them. However, the findings of this study showed that the physical appearance of tradebooks must also be given appropriate consideration. Teachers and librarians responsible for selecting tradebooks for students, who strive to motivate children to read independently, should be conscious of the impact format factors have. The findings of this study suggest that this is especially critical when working with late primary grade children. As was also found in this study, other specific subsamples of children may consider certain factors important in their selection of tradebooks. Teachers and librarians should be as aware as possible of this.

Reviewers should also be aware of the impact of format on book selection and should include in their reviews comments regarding the physical appearance of tradebooks, since teachers and librarians often base their selection of books for children on reviews.

The following guidelines for the selection of tradebooks for late primary and late intermediate grade children are based on the format preferences found in this investigation:

1. While books having a variety of page sizes should be availalbe to late primary grade children, the majority

of books for late intermediate grade children should contain pages of approximately 5 1/2 inches by 8 1/4 inches. The majority of these older children will tend to shy away from books much smaller or much larger than these dimensions.

2. Type in books for late primary grade children should be at least 12 point, but preferably larger (18 point). For the majority of late intermediate grade children, 12 point type is appropriate. For both groups, 8 point should be avoided.

3. The type style of books children read in both the late primary grades and late intermediate grades should be a simple, clear type style, regardless of serifs or their absense since a large majority of children were primary concerned with legibility of the printed word.

4. For both late primary and intermediate grade children, books with illustrations in the middle of the page which imterrupt the print and continuity of the text make undesirable choices.

Implications for Publishers and Book Designers

In addition to the implications for those responsible for the selection of books for children, this study offers possible suggestions to publishers and book designers of books intended for late primary grade and late intermediate grade children:

1. There has been atendency for variety in page size to cease once children no longer read picture books. The

findings of this study suggest that late primary grade children, as a group, appreciate variety in page size. In addition, the study showed that some late intermediate grade children also want some variety in page size, since a substantial portion (38.6%0 selected the large page size. Therefore, books of varied page size should be available to late primary grade children, and some variety, tending toward larger than standard size, should be published for late intermediate grade children.

2. The predominance of 12 point type is evident in books published for children in grade levels of those in this study. The findings suggest, however, that larger type, usually reserved for picture books intended for the younger child, is often preferred by children in the late primary grades and by some late intermediate grade children. More books with larger type should be availalbe to these children.

3. The use of type similar in style to Paladium (for example, Baskerville) is common in many children's books. The results of this study suggest that the Futura style type is considered by many children to be more desirable to find on the printed page than the common Paladium style. Consequently, book designers should consider using the Futura style type. In addition, since twenty percent of the total sample preferred the ornate Parinesy style, a few book should be printed in this or similar style.

4. Book designers are concerned with creating attractive, eye-appealing double-spreads and, therefore, use a variety of illustration positions to achieve this goal. Often the illustration is placed in the middle of the page with printed text above and below the illustration. The findings of this study suggest that children are not as concerned with the eye-appeal as they are with an order to reading and a desire to avoid confusion. Designers, therefore, should create books with illustrations either at the top or bottom of the page.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study has attempted to shed some light on the importance of and preference for selected areas of format in children's books. It is hoped that these findings will aid those responsible for the selection of tradebooks for children and, in addition, serve as an impetus for further research. Areas of format which should be investigated include answers to such questions as (1) Do children consistantly select books in which certain format variatioons appear? (2) Is the role of format in book selection influenced by a child's purpose for reading? (3) Does the subject matter or literary genre of a book predetermine a format preference in the minds of children? and (4) Does a preference for one format factor exist independently of a preference for another factor?

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